Railway tenders through internet

† 2890. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Railways is considering a proposal to invite tenders through internet, for its various projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Floating of tenders by Zonal Railways through internet is under consideration. The modalities are being worked out and the details are under finalisation.

Amenities to rail commuters

2891. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Comptroller and Auditor General of India has indicted the Railway Administration for its dismal track record in providing minimum passenger amenities to commuters, as reported in the Hindu dated 28th March, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken for providing better facilities like drinking water, departmental catering etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India has laid its Report No. 9 & 9A of 2002-Union Government (Railways) in Parliament on 22.03.2002. In report No. 9A of 2002-Ccntral Reviews, Chapter-II has been included on the subject 'Passenger Amenities on Indian Railways'. As per the laid down procedure Action Taken Notes, duly

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

vetted by Audit, are furnished to Public Accounts Committee on Audit Paras included in C&AG Reports.

(c) It is Railways' constant endeavour to provide adequate amenities to the passengers at its stations. Elimination of deficiency in amenities and its augmentation is a continuous process and every year, the availability of amenities at stations is reviewed and the works are undertaken considering the availability of resources and other relative priorities. Zonal Railways have been instructed to take into account all such suggestions while formulating their Annual Works Programme proposals.

Every year, Railways' are making high allotments for passenger amenity works. An Allotment of Rs. 200 crore has been made for "Passenger Amenities" during 2002-2003 as against Revised estimate of Rs. 169 crore for the year 2001-2002. Further, to celebrate the 150th year of Railway services, the coming year has been dedicated to 'rail traveller* and has been declared as the "Passenger Amenities Year".

Moreover, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has been set up to upgrade, professionalise and modernise the catering and hospitality services over Indian Railways.

Decongestion of saturated rail routes

2892. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report, "Railway Panel wants saturated routes decongested", published in the Hindu dated the 13th March, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto;

(c) steps proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(d) the amount of investment required to revamp the basic infrastructure, like routes?